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Moot Court Program Ranks No. 2 in Nation: Record No. 2 Ranking Highlights OU Law Competitions Program

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MOOT COURT PROGRAM

ranks

NO. 2 IN NATION



Record No. 2 ranking highlights OU Law Competitions Program

OU Law jumped 12 spots, advancing to No. 2 in the nation in the Blakely Advocacy Institute's 2017 ranking of moot court programs. Marking the fifth consecutive year the OU College of Law has been ranked in the top 20 schools in the country, this year's ranking represents the college's highest placement in school history.

"We were thrilled to learn of this year's Blakely Advocacy Institute's ranking," said Dean Joe Harroz. "At OU Law, we are committed to providing our students with a world-class legal education, and part of that includes exposing them to moot court competitions."

The No. 2 ranking qualifies the OU College of Law for the 2018 Andrews Kurth Kenyon Moot Court National Championship, in which the top 16 schools in the country compete for the Moot Court National Championship. The college was also named a "Top 20 Best Moot Court School of the Decade" by *National Jurist* magazine.

"Our students' tenacity and drive to succeed is inspiring, and the faculty and alumni support we have for our Competitions Program is outstanding," said Harroz. "We are particularly indebted to Professor Connie Smothermon, our director of competitions, for her tireless

work and investment. We are proud of everyone's efforts and grateful to have such strong representatives of OU Law."

In addition to moot court competitions, the Competitions Program led by Smothermon also includes trial and skill competitions. This academic year, 75 OU Law students participated on 36 teams traveling across the country from coast to coast.

"It has been a great year," said Smothermon. "Our students are hard workers and fierce competitors. They represented OU well, and I am very proud of their professionalism. I am



William B. Spong Jr. Invitational
Moot Court Tournament Team
Connor Bourland, Ty Schoenhals

"Participating in a moot court competition has been one of the best experiences of my law school career. The faculty, staff and administration were all very supportive. It was an honor to get to represent the University of Oklahoma College of Law and to be able to contribute to our school's No.2 overall national ranking."

TY SCHOENHALS

"Once we got to the competition, we knew our hard work and the help of the OU Law faculty would pay off. After every successful round, all the way to the finals, the main thought running through my head was how excited and grateful I was. It was an honor to bring hardware back to the College of Law. I look forward to competing again next year."

CONNOR BOURLAND

The team of Ty Schoenhals and Connor Bourland competed in and were named runner-up in the 2017 William B. Spong Jr. Invitational Moot Court Tournament at William & Mary Law School in Williamsburg, Virginia.

also very proud of OU Law's focus on providing opportunities so our students can improve their advocacy skills. The students have certainly taken advantage of those opportunities this season."

It takes the participation of numerous students, faculty, staff and alumni to operate the Competitions Program. "Our successes are a direct result our Legal Research and Writing Program, Honors Workshops, faculty and alumni involvement, and staff and administration support," said Smothermon.

Smothermon also is quick to credit the

dedication of OU Law alumni. "We have six or seven alumni who coach and travel with teams each year as well as 15 to 20 who regularly work with teams," she said. "We are fortunate to have alumni who give many, many hours, days, months and resources to work with and travel with these teams."

Professor Sarah Burstein, who teaches Intellectual Property, Trademarks, Copyright and Patents, and also coaches the International Trademark Association Saul Lefkowitz Moot Court Competition team with Professor Maria Kolar, was pleasantly surprised by the willingness of

alumni to help in preparing teams. "Last year, I invited six local IP lawyers, mostly OU Law alumni, to come be guest judges for our trademark moot court team," said Burstein. "I hoped that, of the six, maybe one or two would say 'yes.' In reality, they were all willing and able to help. This year, I worked on scheduling more expert guest-judge sessions and, yet again, I was blown away by how willing our awesome alumni are to give back by sharing their time and expertise with our students."

Giving back is a reason cited by Oklahoma City attorney Christopher Staine ('10) for serving as an alumni



ABA National Appellate Advocacy Competition
Alex Richard, Ryan Wilson, Colby Byrd

volunteer coach with the Competitions Program. For four years, Staine has coached the teams competing in the Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition sponsored by the National Black Law Students Association. He coached the teams during practice sessions and traveled to competitions with the students.

"I wanted to give back to my alma mater while helping to provide law students with the comprehensive and holistic law school experience I had during my tenure at OU Law," said Staine. "Every student competitor who I have had the pleasure of coaching has uniquely helped to increase my pride in my alma mater and my passion for serving as a volunteer coach for the OU College of Law Competitions Program. It is one of the most fulfilling volunteer experiences I have as an alumnus of OU Law."

Alumna Melissa McDuffey ('15) also reflected upon her experience as a student competitor when Smothermon asked her to consider being an alumni volunteer coach. McDuffey competed in the 2015 American Bar Association Section of Dispute Resolution Representation in Mediation Competition, in which she and teammate Skeeter Jordan ('15) won the regional and national competitions.

"I had wonderful and rewarding experiences when I participated in competitions in law school," said McDuffey. "Competitions provide a practical component to law school where students are able to learn many skills, including writing, public speaking and case strategy. When Professor



National Moot Court Competition Team
Hilary Soileau, Hayley Scott, Michael Nash

"It was exciting for our team's hours of preparation and hard work to pay off again this year by making it back to nationals in New York. Countless professors supported us during this five-month endeavor, whether it was dedicating their time to attend a practice or simply giving us a pep talk. This support undoubtedly allowed our team to constantly improve our writing and oral advocacy skills and led to our success."

HAYLEY SCOTT

"As I look back on this year, and my moot court experience as a whole, it is incredible to reflect on the amount of support and resources OU Law provides to its competition teams. From the advocacy focus of the first-year Legal Research and Writing Program to the dedicated coaching each team receives, being a part of OU Law's Competitions Program is a special experience. None of this would have been possible, however, without the support of faculty, staff and alumni who helped us prepare for our competitions."

MICHAEL NASH

The National Moot Court Team of Hayley Scott, Michael Nash and Hilary Soileau placed second in their regional rounds, securing a spot in the national rounds in New York.



Albert R. Mugel National Tax Moot Court Competition Team
Emily Ramseyer, Jason Bollinger



National Native American Law Student Association Moot Court Competition
Nathan Lobaugh

Smothermon asked me to coach the mediation teams in 2016 and 2017, I was thrilled to be able to help students have the same rewarding experience I had."

McDuffey assisted Professor Erin Means in 2016 and traveled with the team to the regional competition in St. Louis. She took on a more active coaching role in the 2017 competition and even recruited members of her law firm to help the team prepare.

Alumni support of the Competitions Program does not go unnoticed by student competitors. Jason Bollinger and teammate Emily Ramseyer competed in the Albert R. Mugel National Tax Moot Court Competition in Buffalo, New York, and won the award for Best Brief.

"Participating on the tax moot court team has been the highlight of my law school experience thus far," said Bollinger. "We

received our problem approximately one month prior to the competition, so the brief-writing process and oral argument preparation were intense. We couldn't have achieved the success we did without the help of Professor Jonathan Forman and OU Law alumni John Curtis ('16) and Wyatt Swinford ('15). All three spent multiple weekends and evenings helping us prepare."

Establishing and maintaining a nationally recognized moot court program is truly a team effort. "We are overwhelmingly proud of our students, and thankful for our dedicated alumni, faculty and staff," said Harroz. "Everyone's hard work has once again launched OU Law's Competitions Program into the national spotlight, solidifying our college as a leader in legal education and one of our nation's great public law schools."

Alumni volunteers work with student competitors



CHRISTOPHER STAINE

Class of 2010

EMPLOYMENT

Staine is an attorney with Crowe & Dunlevy, based in the firm's Oklahoma

City office, where his practice focuses on bankruptcy and creditor's rights, energy and natural resources, and commercial litigation.

AS A STUDENT

Staine served as the 2009-2010 president of the Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher Chapter of the Black Law Students Association and was an active member of Phi Delta Phi Legal Honor Society and the Board of Advocates. He participated in two competitions – the National Appellate Advocacy Competition, sponsored by the American Bar Association Law Student Division, and the National Moot Court Competition, co-sponsored by the New York City Bar Association and the American College of Trial Lawyers.

He was recognized for his academic excellence by being named the 2009-10 National Black Law Students Association's Most Outstanding Student, a member of the Order of the Barristers and an Amos T. Hall Scholar. In addition, Staine was awarded the Joel Jankowsky Award honoring the most outstanding graduating law student in 2010.

A FAVORITE MEMORY

"One of my favorite coaching memories involves coaching the team of Jonathan Brewer ('15) and Marcus Barahona ('15) in the 2013-14 regional and national Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competitions. Jonathan and Marcus were my first student competitors to coach, and they easily made my coaching experience one to remember by winning the regional competition and securing the third-place award at the national competition. This team's overall success was an accomplishment of which to be proud alone, but the tireless effort and oral advocacy skills that were displayed to obtain that success was what most impressed me. It truly was a reminder that there is no substitute for hard work."



MELISSA MCDUFFEY

Class of 2015

EMPLOYMENT

McDuffey works in the Oklahoma City office of Crowe & Dunlevy. She is a

member of the firm's labor and employment and litigation and trial practice groups.

AS A STUDENT

McDuffey was included on the Dean's List, a member of Phi Delta Phi Legal Honor Society and a note and comment editor for *Oklahoma Law Review*. She received several honors and awards, including selection into Order of the Coif and Order of Solicitors and three American Jurisprudence Awards for Academic Excellence.

McDuffey also competed in the 2015 American Bar Association Section of Dispute Resolution Representation in Mediation Competition, where her team won both the regional and national titles.

A FAVORITE MEMORY

"One of the regional competitions for the 2017 American Bar Association Section of Dispute Resolution Representation in Mediation Competition was in Norman. My favorite memory is when the teams came to my law firm and attorneys in the firm volunteered to critique and advise their performance. The teams came in full competition attire, and they were amazing. My colleagues were able to provide great advice, and the teams really benefitted from that experience."

2016-2017 Competitions

APPELLATE ADVOCACY/MOOT COURT COMPETITIONS

Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition sponsored by the National Black Law Students Association

Team members: Julie Hunter and Isiah Brydie

Coaches: Jonathan Brewer ('15) and Christopher Staine ('10)

Hispanic National Bar Association Moot Court Competition sponsored by the Student Division of the Hispanic National Bar Association

Team members: Katie Wilmes, Jonathan Herrera and Jake Ingle
Coach: Professor Daniel Nicholson

Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition sponsored by the International Law Students Association

Team members: Ryan Hunnicutt, Mackenzie Coplen, Lauren Swanson, Janny Gandhi and Torri Christian
Coaches: Professors Evelyn Aswad and Murray Tabb

American Bar Association Law Student Division National Appellate Advocacy Competition

Team members: Alex Richard, Ryan Wilson, Colby Byrd, Hanna Roberts, Loreli Wright and Jenny Puckett
Coach: Professor Michele Johnson

National Moot Court Competition sponsored by the New York City Bar Association and the American College of Trial Lawyers

Team members: Hayley Scott, Hilary Soileau, Michael Nash, Bryan Lynch, Josh Fanelli and Gerard D'Emilio
Coach: Professor Gail Mullins

National Native American Law Students Association Moot Court Competition

Team members: Austin Vance, Nathan Lobaugh, Olivia Glazner, Kane Cassil, Ashley Helberg and Austin Rabon
Coach: Professor Taiawagi Helton

Saul Lefkowitz Moot Court Competition sponsored by the International Trademark Association

Team members: Eleanor Burg, Kelli Reidlinger, Ariane Takano, Stan West and Natalie Nguyen
Coaches: Professors Sarah Burstein and Maria Kolar

Albert R. Mugel National Tax Law Moot Court Competition sponsored by the SUNY Buffalo Law School

Team members: Emily Ramseyer and Jason Bollinger
Coaches: Professor Jonathan Forman, John C. Curtis ('16) and Wyatt Swinford ('15)

Ruby R. Vale Interschool Corporate Moot Court Competition sponsored by Widener University School of Law

Team members: Nicole Ward, Alex Sokolosky, Hannah Holmes and Joshua Conaway
Coach: Professor Megan Shaner

William B. Spong Jr. Invitational Moot Court Tournament

Team members: Leslie Gile, Maggie Logan, Connor Bourland and Ty Schoenhals
Coach: Professor Mary Sue Backus

Charleston School of Law National Moot Court Competition

Team members: Kelly Bergin, Gunner Joyce and Steven Harris
Coach: Professor Rick Tepker

Andrews Kurth Kenyon Moot Court National Championship

Team members: Audrey Roth, Lindsey Tanner and Ryan Wilson
Coaches: Professor Connie Smothermon and Lindsay Kistler ('16)

TRIAL TEAM COMPETITIONS

American Association for Justice Student Trial Advocacy Competition

Team members: Susan Kuruvilla, David Schwartz, Erin Thompson, Ginny Johnson, Brennan Clay, Anthony Dee, Kayla Kuri and Kelly Offutt
Coaches: Professor Connie Smothermon and Emily Mueller ('11)

National Trial Competition sponsored by the American College of Trial Lawyers and the Texas Young Lawyers Association

Team members: Genni Ellis, Matt Schlake, Lucas West, Eric Meissner and Ricky Lutz
Coach: Professor Mary Ann Roberts

American Bar Association Section of Labor and Employment Law Trial Advocacy Competition

Team members: Jeremiah Gregory, Alex Richard, Chris Forasiepi, Kelly Offutt and Matt Craig
Coach: Professor Connie Smothermon

Redbud Classic Trial Competition sponsored by the University of Tulsa

Team members: Ashley Helburg, Austin Rabon, Genni Ellis and Tonika Brown
Coach: Professor Connie Smothermon

SKILLS COMPETITIONS

American Bar Association Law Student Division Client Counseling Competition

Team members: Joanna Hensley,
Emilee Crowther, Leann Farha and
Maegan Whelchel

Coach: Professor Amy Pepper

American Bar Association Law Student Division Negotiation Competition

Team members: Jillian Goodman,
Evan Way, Morgen Potts, Robin Kirk,
Dillion Turner and Molly Clinkscales

Coach: Scott Backus ('08)

American Bar Association Law Student Division Arbitration Competition

Team members: Shawn Ceyler,
Kanton Vaverka, Alex Sullivan and
Brendon Palmer

Coaches: Professor Connie Smothermon
and Micah Cartwright ('16)

American Bar Association Section of Dispute Resolution Representation in Mediation Competition

Team members: Mitchell Spencer,
Orin Strand, Tonika Brown and
Teddy Webb

Coach: Melissa McDuffey ('15)

L. Edward Bryant Jr. National Health Law Transactional Competition

Team members: Joseph Geresi,
Whitney Dockery and Alexander Albert

Coaches: Professors Gail Mullins and
Connie Smothermon

South Texas College of Law Houston Energy Law Negotiation Competition

Team members: Douglas Brooking and
Jessica Fredrickson

Coach: Jordan Volino ('16) | **SL** |

2016-2017 Competitions Program alumni volunteers

COACHED AND TRAVELED WITH TEAMS

Scott Backus ('08)
Jonathan Brewer ('15)
Micah Cartwright ('16)
Lindsay Kistler ('16)

Melissa McDuffey ('15)
Emily Mueller ('11)
Christopher Staine ('10)
Jordan Volino ('16)

COACHED/ASSISTED WITH PRACTICES

Emily Bunting ('10)
Jade Caldwell ('12)
Nick Coffey ('16)
John C. Curtis ('16)
Jered Davidson ('12)
Clifford C. Dougherty ('85)
Alex Duncan ('15)
Paige Hoster Good ('13)
Justin Grose ('12)
Nathan Hall ('16)
Derrick Harvey ('01)
Jeffrey Hendrickson ('16)
Blake Johnson ('15)
Jenna Rader Johnson ('01)
Harry "Skeeter" Jordan ('15)
Rachel Jordan ('16)
James Linhardt ('13)
Heidi Long ('97)

Mitch McGrew ('16)
Brett Merritt ('14)
Trisha Misak ('97)
Andrew Morris ('13)
Gauri Nautiyal ('13)
Sam Newton ('13)
Tiffany Noble ('16)
Marcus Pacheco ('16)
Lori Spencer Puckett ('94)
Alia Ramirez ('16)
Ann Robl ('11)
David M. Sullivan ('00)
Cullen Sweeney ('10)
Wyatt Swinford ('15)
Brett Thomas ('15)
Jeff Vogt ('15)
Tynia Watson ('11)
Patrick Wyrick ('07)

2016-2017 Competitions Program faculty volunteers

Wayne Alley
Evelyn Aswad
Mary Sue Backus
Brenda Barnes ('99)
Kenton Brice ('09)
Sarah Burstein
Steve Cleveland
Monika Ehrman
Jonathan Forman
Darin Fox ('92)
Steve Gensler
Katheleen Guzman
Taiawagi Helton
Stephen Henderson
Michelle Johnson
Maria Kolar

Brian McCall
Erin Means ('09)
Melissa Mortazavi
Gail Mullins ('93)
Daniel Nicholson ('02)
Laura Palk ('92)
Amy Pepper ('87)
Mary Ann Roberts ('97)
Ted Roberts ('64)
Joshua Sellers
Megan Shaner
Connie Smothermon
Murray Tabb
Rick Tepker